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ABSTRACT

This student magazine gives maps and a geographic description of Umatilla and Morrow counties in Oregon, paying particular attention to those features that attracted various ethnic groups, and especially Mexican Americans, to this location. Topics presented are: "Ethnic Communities"; "Ethnic Folklife"; "Traditional Foods"; "Traditional Crafts"; "Celebrations"; "Religious Celebrations"; and "Music and Dance"; and "Community Life." Vocabulary words, highlighted in the text, are defined in the glossary. Student readers are invited to interview local immigrants from each of the Mexican states shown on an included map to determine the geography and traditions of Mexico. The magazine concludes with a word search of the highlighted text words. The curriculum guide gives suggestions for classroom activities related to each of the magazine topics. Emphasis is upon student understanding of personal family tradition in comparison to, or in context of, Mexican American traditions. Use of local human and material resources is encouraged. (MM)

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MEXICAN AMERICAN TRADITIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

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STUDENT MAGAZINE

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MEXICAN AMERICAN TRADITIONAL ARTS AND CULTURE

STUDENT MAGAZINE

Oregon Folklife Classroom Series
Oregon Folk Arts Program
1200 SW Park Avenue
Portland, OR 97205
(503) 306-5290 • (503) 221-2035 fax

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c 1994

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PHOTOGRAPHS by Nancy J. Nusz
COVER: Members of Grupo Folklórico Quetzalcoatl

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Introduction

Umatilla and Morrow counties are located on the south bank of the Columbia River in northeastern Oregon. Before **Euro-American** settlers came west, **Native Americans** fished, hunted and gathered **seasonal vegetation** in the region. Today, the area around Hermiston is one of the state's richest **agricultural** centers.

The land and **climate** are dry, so the local rivers have always been important to the people living in the region. The Columbia River supplies water for **irrigation** and electrical energy. The river is also a **transportation route**, a recreation place, and a source for food with its fish.

Morrow County

Umatilla County

The rivers have made life possible in this location. Even today, without irrigation there would be very little, if any, farming in the region. Using modern **technology**, farmers and **engineers** have improved irrigation methods in the last 20 years. Crops now grow in circular fields because of **center-pivot irrigation**. This method uses a motor in the center of the field to move an irrigation arm. The arm rotates very slowly while watering the crops. From the sky, the land around Hermiston looks like a piece of polka-dotted fabric.

Over time Hermiston expanded because of new **industries**. The Umatilla Army Depot brought **military personnel**. People came to build and operate the McNary Dam and power facilities. Now, agriculture attracts workers from other places in the United States and Mexico.

Everyone has a story about how his/her family got to eastern Oregon. Ask your parents why your family originally moved to eastern Oregon? If you are Native American, were your ancestors from this region of the state? Find out the story of your family's reason for moving here and write a story about it.

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Ethnic Communities

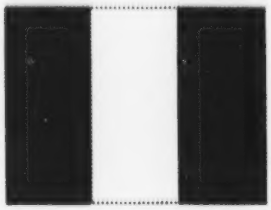
Each person belongs to many groups. family, church, clubs, ethnic community, and more. An **ethnic group** is a group of people who share a certain background. People who come from the same country or **culture**, speak the same language, and have the same **traditions** belong to an **ethnic group**.

For example, people from Filipino, German, Vietnamese, Mexican, Native American, Irish and Scottish communities in the United States belong to different ethnic groups.

About 500 years ago Europeans came to this **hemisphere**. A number of European countries claimed parts of the North American **continent** for their governments. England, France, and Spain had strong influences on the development of the United States, Canada and Mexico.

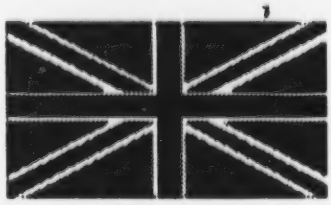
These are the three countries of North America. Today, English, French, and Spanish are still the languages spoken by most people living in these countries. There are also many other **Native languages** spoken throughout the North American **continent**.

Native American Indians lived in Oregon before the Euro-American settlers came. There were many tribes of people who spoke different languages and practiced different traditions. **Plateau** tribes of **Umatilla, Cayuse** and **Nez Perce** Indians are some of the **original inhabitants** of northeastern Oregon.



FRANCE

GREAT BRITAIN



SPAIN

Columbia River petroglyph

European settlers came to Oregon with their families to start a new life. In the years before the formation of the United States, Great Britain gained control over the territory. This meant that the United States became English-speaking by law. People of other **nationalities** and new **immigrants** who were not English-speaking had to learn the new language. Native Americans also had to speak English even though this was their **homeland** before Europeans arrived.

The situation of learning a new language caused changes in families and cultural groups. In most families there were:

1) some members who only spoke their native language,

2) some who spoke both the old and new languages, and

3) the younger **generation** who spoke only English.

This is still true within many new immigrant groups.

The United States has always been a country with many different ethnic groups. This means that people of all nationalities and cultural backgrounds live here. Each person comes from an **ethnic heritage**.

Last names often tell part of the history of your ancestry. In the early history of the United States, many Native Americans and African Americans were forced to take European last names. Find out the story of your father's and mother's last names. What country or countries do they come from? Put a dot on the map for each country. What languages did your ancestors speak when they came to North America? If you are Native American Indian, what languages did your ancestors speak? What is your ethnic background?

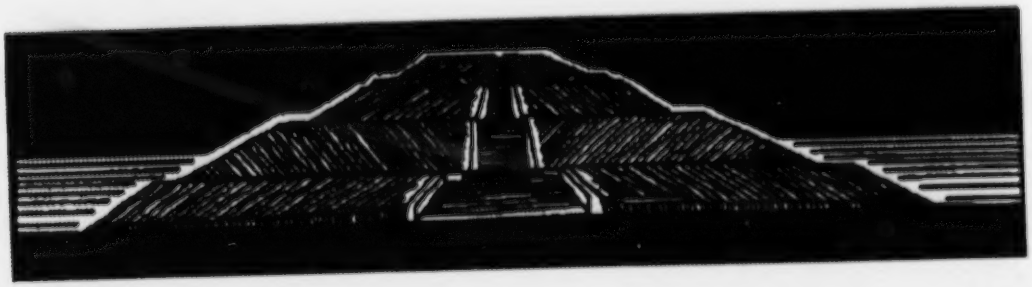
Folklife is a word made up of two words: folk and life. The word "folk" usually means people or refers to a particular group of people. The word "life" includes all of the daily activities people do in their lives. "Folklife" means the daily traditional activities, information, and art forms of a particular group of people.

Traditions are part of every person's life. We learn traditions from people in our families, on the job, at church, in our neighborhoods, and from members of our ethnic groups. **Customs**, beliefs, stories, dance, music, games, foods, celebrations, and crafts are types of traditions.

Mexican Americans are one of eastern Oregon's largest ethnic groups. People of Mexican heritage move to Oregon from Florida, Texas, New Mexico, California, Mexico, and other places. They come to find work and live in this region of the country. They bring many traditions with them. Traditions play a major part in the daily lives of Mexican Americans.

This is a study of Mexican American traditions in Oregon. This will help each person understand his or her own traditions as well as those of neighbors. It is a celebration of every group's identity.

Do you belong to any groups? Which ones? Choose one and name some of the traditions that group members have in common with each other. What are the things that help you recognize this group?



Traditional Foods

Mexican American home life is similar to the home life of other groups. The kitchen is the center of activity in most Mexican American homes. Here, the mother prepares meals and family members gather to begin and end each day. The smells of their familiar foods mix with lots of conversation.

Mexican food is very popular throughout the United States. Restaurants, especially fast food ones, make Mexican foods available in most cities. Yet, few people outside of Mexican Americans know how to make the many different types of traditional foods.

Traditional foods, like other elements in cultures, have evolved over time. Mexican foods are made from the vegetables, fruits, grains, and animals grown in the various regions throughout Mexico. The people who settled the various regions developed seasonings and ways of preparing their food dishes. Many of the dishes come from ancient Indian cultures.

Think about the culture of your ancestors. What types of foods grow in the regions they came from? What are some traditional dishes from the cultures of your ancestors? Does your family still eat some of those traditional dishes?

Tortillas are a basic part of the Mexican diet in Hermiston. Tortillas are a type of flat bread eaten at almost every meal. Many women make fresh corn or wheat tortillas every day. Some make the dough and use a tortilla press to flatten it into tortillas. Others use the traditional method of hand-shaping each tortilla.

Doña Petra Torres of Hermiston uses a *metate* to prepare the dough for her tortillas.

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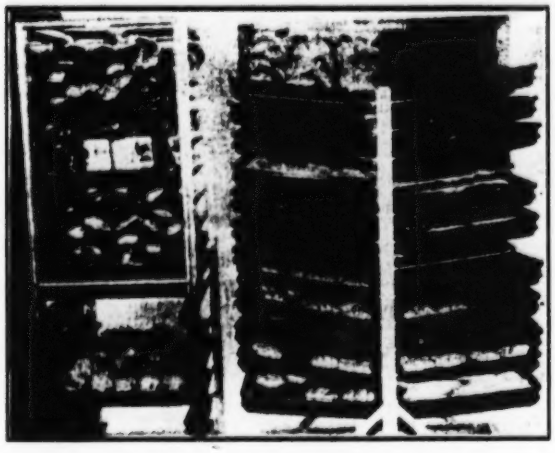
Doña Petra Torres of Hermiston mixes flour and water to make the dough. She kneads the dough on a metate, a stone grinding surface. Next, she forms the dough into small balls. Then she uses her hands to pat out each individual tortilla. The tortillas are perfectly round when she is finished. Doña Torres then heats the tortillas on a flat griddle.

Bread is a staple food in many countries. It comes in many forms. Do you know any other types of bread eaten in other cultures? Do some research to find out more about breads eaten by different groups of people.



Pastry racks in a local Mexican bakery

Another traditional Mexican food is *carne seca*, or dried meat. Before people had modern refrigerators, they dried meat and fish to preserve them through the year. One method of drying beef and pork, is to season it then hang it on a line to dry for several days. The meat can be stored and cooked for meals later. This is a traditional method that has been passed down from one generation to the next. *Carne seca* is still a favorite meat of people who grew up eating it in their homes.

There are hundreds of recipes for daily meals. Foods such as ***frijoles*** (beans), ***mole*** (meat with a special chili sauce), and ***menudo*** (tripe soup) are some of the more common ones. There are special recipes prepared for holidays. For example, ***tamales*** are popular during Christmas. *Tamales* are made of meat and cornmeal, wrapped in a cornhusk, then simmered in a chile sauce.

What are some of the traditional foods eaten in your home? Do you eat special foods on holidays? If so, what? Collect a traditional recipe from your family. Prepare the dish and share it with your class.

Traditional Crafts

Mexican culture is rich in many types of traditional or folk art. People who make traditional crafts are called folk artists. A folk artist is someone who learned an art form from someone else in his or her group. Folk artists may be from family, occupational, religious, regional, or ethnic groups.

Traditional Mexican crafts include **crochet, embroidery, *piñatas*, pottery,** wood carvings, ***charro*** hats, **straw weavings, woven fabrics,** paper flowers, leather sandals, and much more. Many folk artists make traditional crafts by hand in their homes. Children often grow up watching adult family members making crafts. Sometimes, a child begins learning how to make traditional crafts by helping an adult.

Do you know anyone who makes a traditional craft? Interview the person and find out: 1) who taught him/her? and 2) at what age did he/she learn the craft? Which group did the person you interview and the person who taught them belong to? Do you make anything that someone else taught you how to make? Often, students know how to make paper airplanes, fortune tellers, or woven bracelets. These are traditional crafts of students.

Maria de la Luz Uribe shows a student how to make flowers out of nylon material.

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In Mexican culture, **needlecrafts** are highly valued. Many women in the Hermiston area make beautiful crocheted work using thread and a crochet hook. Women crochet clothes for dolls, babies, and family members. Crocheted **doilies** are placed around the home as decorations on furniture. These help make the house a beautiful home.

Crochet and embroidery are most often done by women. Girls begin learning from their mothers and grandmothers when they are young. By the time they reach adulthood, they are often teaching younger girls.

There are traditional embroidery designs that **symbolize** particular regions of Mexico. For example, the **peacock** is often embroidered by women and girls whose **family roots** are in the state of **Durango**. Women from other Mexican regions will often embroider their own special designs on clothing to show where their families are from in Mexico. People wear their embroidery with pride because it shows others that they are skilled and proud of their heritage.

Do you know anyone who does a needlecraft? Find out who they earned this craft from. Were the patterns passed down, or are they from a book? If someone in your family knows how to do a needlecraft, ask them to show you how to do it.

Mexico, like the rest of North America, has many different groups of **indigenous** people. Mexico's Indian population is very large and **diverse**. Their native languages are different than Spanish. They also have different craft traditions. There are many **Mixtec Indians** from **Oaxaca** living in the Hermiston area. The Mixtec culture is rich with many traditions.

Some of the Mixtec women carry on ancient pottery traditions. In Mexico, they dig the clay from their home soil. The women shape it into eating bowls, cups, and other dishes. After the clay dries out for several days, they *fire* the pots on an open pit. The women make larger

cookware like the ***comal***, a flat griddle used to heat tortillas, and large bowls for making *mole*.

Cesilia Santiago of Stanfield makes a *comal* at Hermiston High School

Some traditional crafts are associated with certain celebrations and age groups. For example, ***piñatas*** and ***cascarones*** are party items made for children's enjoyment. Usually adults make the objects. However, children sometimes help in the process.

Piñatas were originally made with clay pots that were decorated and filled with candies. Today, they are constructed from balloons or cardboard boxes, crepe paper, and glue. Today's *piñatas* are made in the shapes of animals, stars, ice cream cones and popular cartoon characters. Their hollow centers are filled with candy and treats. Children have fun trying to break them with a stick while they are blindfolded. *Piñatas* are part of birthday, Christmas, and other holiday celebrations.

Cascarones are less known to non-Mexicans. These are often made by family members. The mother will carefully break off the pointed end of an eggshell and remove the yolk. Next, children paint the shell and fill it with confetti. Lastly, they glue a thin piece of paper over the opening. On special celebration days children have fun cracking the *cascarones* on the heads of their friends.

Do you have any traditions of making something to help celebrate birthdays or other special occasions? Think about a special occasion that your family celebrates, and write down all of the things that help make it extraordinary.

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Celebrations

Community celebrations or **fiestas**, as parties and community celebrations are called in Spanish, are important to all groups. Social celebrations help people enjoy each others company. Religious celebrations bring people together to honor their spiritual beliefs. National celebrations allow people to express their pride in being from a particular country or ethnic group.

Birthdays are family celebrations that honor each person on his or her special day. In Mexican tradition, a girl's most important birthday is her fifteenth. The celebration for this birthday is called a ***quinceañera*** in Spanish. The girl who is 15 is also called *quinceañera*.

A *quinceañera* is a very big event and at first it may seem more like a wedding than a birthday. It is grand because this birthday symbolizes a girl's entry into **womanhood**. An event which marks an important life-change is called a **rite-of-passage**.

Extended family members like cousins, aunts and uncles, and grandparents, and people in the community help plan and celebrate a girl's *quinceañera*. Someone like Cecila de la Garza of Hermiston may make the dresses for the girl and her **attendants**. An uncle may rent a hall and the band. Aunts and cousins may prepare the foods. Friends help get each other ready for the big party.

How does your family celebrate birthdays? Are there special things that happen on that day? What foods do you eat and who celebrates with you? What year's birthday do you look forward to the most? Why?

Mexican American communities throughout the country celebrate two very important historic holidays: ***Cinco de Mayo*** (May 5) and September 16 or Mexican Independence Day. These events, like the Fourth of July in the United States, give people the opportunity to celebrate their nationality and heritage.

Cinco de Mayo is the date May 5. This is the date in 1862 when Mexican forces led by **General Ignacio Zaragoza** defeated French soldiers at **Puebla**, Mexico. Mexican Independence Day, September 16, is the date Mexico gained its independence from Spain. This is similar to the Fourth of July for the United States.

These Mexican holidays are celebrated by Mexican communities in Umatilla and Morrow counties. The events are held outdoors with activities throughout the day. Bands play traditional music while dance groups perform regional dances from around Mexico. Later, couples dance together to different types of music. People also sell traditional foods and hand-made crafts. The events are very family-oriented and children play together. There are usually several *piñatas* broken during the day. People have a wonderful time celebrating together.

How do you and your family spend the Fourth of July? What activities do you do? What foods do you eat at this special time? Do you celebrate Mexican Independence? What activities do you do? What foods do you eat?

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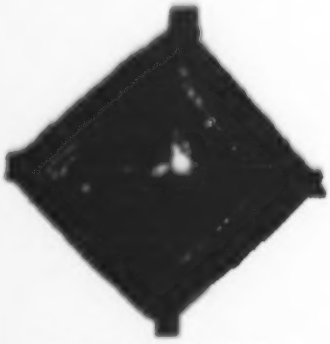
Religious Celebrations

Mexican culture also celebrates many religious holidays. One of the most famous is December 12, the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The Mexican government even recognizes her as the country's Patroness, who looks out for the good of the country and its people. Paintings of Our Lady of Guadalupe are in public places as well as in Roman Catholic churches throughout Mexico.

There are always traditional stories about people who influence others. It is the same for spiritual or religious figures. Most Mexicans know the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Ojo de Dios (God's Eye)

A Version of the Legend:

In 1531, the Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego on a hillside outside of Mexico City. She had him go to the Bishop and ask that a chapel be built in her honor on the spot where she appeared.

Diego went, but the Bishop did not believe that the Lady had appeared to a poor Indian peasant. The Bishop wanted a sign of proof from her before he would believe the peasant. Juan Diego returned to the hillside where the Lady had appeared, and, once again, she visited him.

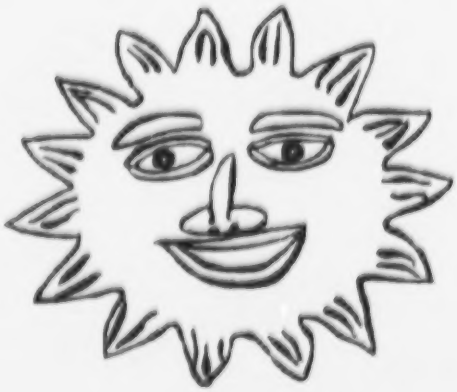
This time she told him to pick the roses that miraculously bloomed on that cold December day and take them to the Bishop. He obeyed, gathering the flowers in the folds of his *tilma*, a shirt-like garment.

When Juan saw the Bishop, he opened his *tilma*, and the roses fell onto the floor. At that moment, the image of the Lady of Guadalupe appeared on the front of Juan's *tilma*.

Do you know any stories about famous people or heros? Are there stories in your family about a funny aunt or a stubborn uncle? Does everyone in the family tell the story the same way or do different people tell their own version of the story? Collect a story about a person to tell the class.

Mexican Americans in eastern Oregon also celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12. In Hermiston, people gather at Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church at midnight on the 11th of December. They sing *Las Mañanitas* which are early morning songs about the Mother of Mexico. People pray to her to help heal the sick and to take care of any problems.

Tree of Life design

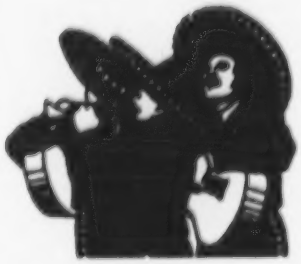


Mixtec Sun design

The next afternoon people gather for a Catholic Mass. During this church service, a group of young people perform a short play about the story. Three people dress as Our Lady of Guadalupe, Juan Diego, and the Bishop. Some of the young people in the audience also dress as one of these three characters. Afterwards, there is a party with food and music.

Are there special spiritual events your family celebrates? Do you perform any plays about a story? Are costumes, special foods and music part of the celebrations? If so, what?

Music and Dance Traditions



Music and dance are at the heart of Mexican culture. There are many types of music and dances. Just like folk crafts, traditional music and dance are learned from others in the ethnic community.

Almost every type of celebration in Mexican American culture has music as part of it. One of the most common types of songs sung by individuals is the ***corrido***. *Corridos* are folk songs that tell a story. Some songs are about happenings in Mexico. Newer *corridos* may describe events that took place in Oregon. Usually, someone plays the guitar while singing *corridos*. Traditionally men sang *corridos*, although today a few women are also singing them.

Band music is a very popular for any type of fiesta or party. ***Mariachi*** music may be one of the most popular forms.

Emilio Zapata plays guitar and sings corridos

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Musicians usually dress in *charro* outfits. This outfit includes tight-fitting pants and a shirt decorated with metal buttons and chains. A large *sombrero* hat is part of the outfit, too. *Mariachi* musicians play several guitars and a trumpet or two. The music is very lively and symbolizes the Mexican spirit.

Another type of popular band music is called *banda*. Often *mariachis* also play *banda* music. People hire bands from Hood River and Yakima, Washington for special occasions. There is a very established network among the Mexican communities in eastern Oregon and Washington and western Idaho.

What are your favorite types of music? Have you heard mariachi music? Do you know any corridos? Do you know any songs that tell a story? Do you or does anyone in your family play music? When is music played in your family's life?

People enjoy dancing at Hermiston's celebration of Mexican Independence Day, September 16.

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Hermiston is fortunate to have a Mexican folk dance group, *Grupo Folklórico Quetzalcoatl*. This is an adult group. Members practice in the evenings and on weekends. The group performs dances from different regions of Mexico. Each dance has different music, dance steps, and costumes. This is because each region of Mexico has different traditions.

The *Grupo Folklórico's* director is Pablo Garay. He was born in Mexico where he began dancing at a young age. Mr. Garay travels to Mexico often in order to learn more dances. He wants to keep the dances alive in eastern Oregon. He says the dances help people remember where they are from and that their culture is very important.

There are also traditional **social dances**. People learn these from each other and dance them at social events. A very popular style among young Mexican Americans is ***banda***. In this dance, the girl leans back almost to the floor while the boy leads her around the dance floor. Sometimes the couples wear western-style clothing to dance *banda*.

There are other dance groups for children in Boardman and Hermiston. Do you dance folk dances or do you know someone who does? Do you know any types of dances that you have learned from your friends or family members? What are they and what types of music go with the dances?

Wheat weaving

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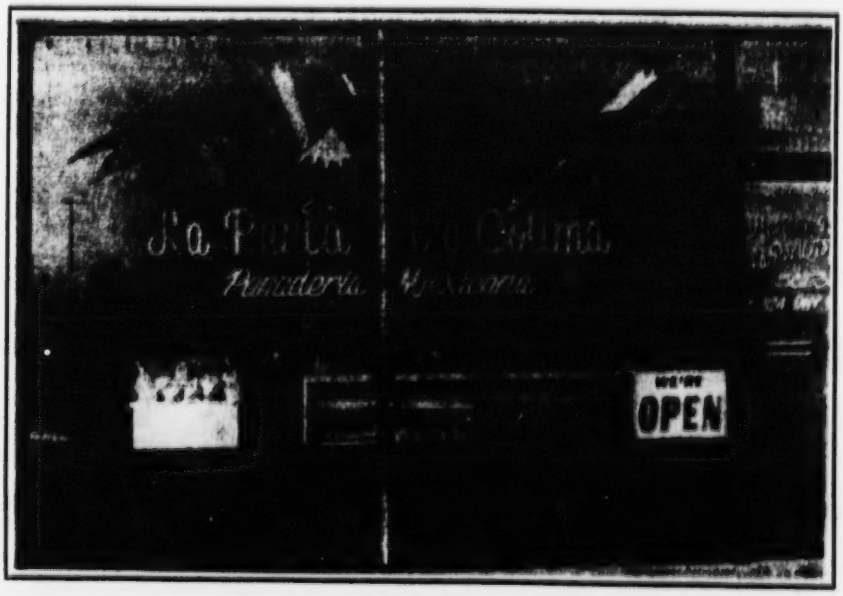
Community Life

The presence of Mexican Americans in eastern Oregon has **enriched** the life of the region. Approximately 20% of the population or 20 of every 100 people in the region is now Mexican American. New stores and businesses supply some of the needs of the people. You can see Mexican bakeries, music shops, restaurants and clothing stores in shopping centers and downtown. One can buy Spanish language music, videos, **all-occasion cards**, Mexican candies and **pastries**, and much more.

Other businesses also provide services for Mexican American residents. Spanish **advertisements** to shop at local grocery stores and banks are on the radio and in the newspaper every day. One can purchase Mexican foods and **condiments** in quick-stop food markets. The whole community has the opportunity to appreciate the traditional ways of the Mexican American community.

Have you visited one of the local Mexican stores? Take a friend and visit one. If you are not familiar with what is for sale, ask the storekeeper for help.



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GLOSSARY

banda	A popular music and dance style among many young Mexican Americans
carne seca	Dried meat
cascarones	Hollow eggshells painted and filled with confetti
charro outfits	A traditional set of clothing that includes tight-fitting pants, a decorated shirt, and a large brimmed hat or sombrero
Cinco de Mayo	May 5 commemorates the day General Ignacio Zaragoza defeated French soldiers
comal	A flat griddle made of clay used to heat tortillas
corridas	Folk songs that tell a story
fiestas	Community celebrations and parties
frijoles	Beans *
Las Mañanitas	Early morning songs to the Lady of Guadalupe
mariachi	A lively style of Mexican music that usually includes several guitars and trumpets
metate	A flat grinding stone *
mole	A stew seasoned with chili sauce *
piñatas	Colorful three dimensional shapes with hollow interiors that are filled with candy and treats
quinceañera	A fifteen year old female; also celebration of a female's fifteenth birthday
sombrero	A hat *
tamales	A traditional food dish made of meat and cornmeal wrapped in a cornhusk and cooked in chili sauce *
tilma	A shirt-like garment
tortilla	A flat bread made of corn or wheat *
tortilla press	A kitchen device that flattens dough into a tortilla

* Some of the definitions are taken from *The Bantam New College Spanish Dictionary* by Edwin B. Williams, Ph.D, 1991.

Mexico

Look at the map of Mexico and locate some of the Mexican states. Choose one as a research topic. Find out: what the land and climate are like; what types of crops grow there; what the region's traditional music and dance are; and what different culture groups live there. Interview people from your local community who are from that region or another region in Mexico.

Aguascalientes
Baja California Norte
Baja California Sur
Campeche
Coahuila
Colima
Chiapas
Chihuahua
Distrito Federal
Durango
Guanajuato

Guerrero
Hidalgo
Jalisco
Mexico
Michoacan
Morelos
Nayarit
Nuevo Leon
Oaxaca
Puebla

Queretaro
Quintana Roo
San Luis Potosi
Sinaloa
Sonora
Tabasco
Tamaulipas
Tlaxcala
Veracruz
Yucatan
Zacatecas

Folklife Word Search

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peacock
diverse
indigenous
spiritual
Guadalupe
mariachi
sombrero
dances
music
legend

Mexican American Traditional Arts and Culture Curriculum Guide

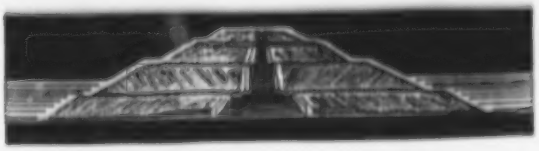
Notes to the Teacher:

The student magazine and curriculum guide are components of a Mexican American Folk Arts in Education unit. Although these materials may be used separately, they are intended to be used in conjunction with the complete educational unit that includes: 1) a table-top exhibit, 2) folk arts objects with artists' biographical sheets, 3) overhead projector transparencies, 4) written resource materials and 5) media products. In addition, we encourage teachers to invite Mexican American folk artists to visit the classroom while studying the unit. Visits by folk artists may be arranged through the Arts in Education program at the Eastern Oregon Regional Arts Council (503) 962-3857. Suggestions for folk artists to invite are contained within the guide. Individual teachers should make their own arrangements for all other fieldtrips and visitors to the classroom.

The curriculum materials "Mexican American Traditional Arts and Culture" were written with grades 3-8, social studies students in mind. However, instructors may adapt any of the information to fit different ability levels and content areas. The ideas and activities presented here are meant to be a starting point. The teachers who helped design the curriculum unit encourage adapting the materials to various subject areas including art, math, science, and language arts.

The student magazine contains words that may be difficult for some students. These are in bold print in the text and are listed at the beginning of each section in this guide. Instructors should decide ahead of time the needs of their individual classrooms and review accordingly. Each section also poses questions to students. You may use these and other suggestions in this guide as discussion-starters.

There are numerous articles and books written on topics of Mexican American traditional arts and culture. Several articles and books like Folklife and Fieldwork and Student Worlds Student Words by Elizabeth Radin Simons are excellent guides for improving interviewing and writing skills. Some of these resources are enclosed in the kit to better enable you and your students to get the most out of this exciting study of Mexican American Traditional Arts & Culture.



Introduction

Words to Review: Euro-Americans, Native Americans, seasonal vegetation, agricultural, climate, irrigation, transportation route, technology, engineers, center-pivot irrigation, industries, military personnel

Help students become acquainted with the physical dimensions of the local region. They should understand the local physical geography since it helps shape the way people live in this area. Ask students to think of the many ways that the Columbia River and the rich lands of the Columbia plateau effect their lives and the life of the community. Use a good map of the region to look at these important physical features. Ask what things make a physical region? See if they can figure out where things begin to change physically and where another physical region might begin.

New developments in technology can dramatically change the character of life in a region. Do some historical investigation about what life was like in the area before Europeans came, before irrigation, before the Umatilla Army Depot, and before the McNary Dam was built. Interviews with parents, grandparents, and older local citizens about these specific aspects of the region's past could be helpful. Have the class create a timeline that pinpoints important dates in the history of their region.

Use the student questions at the end of this section to have students write a story. Compile these in a book of family histories of the class.

Ethnic Communities

Words to Review: ethnic group, culture, traditions, hemisphere, continent, Native languages, plateau, Umatilla, Cayuse, Nez Pearce, original inhabitants, nationalities, immigrants, homeland, generation, ethnic heritage

Ask students to investigate language changes within their own families. Have them to inquire about whether there are members of their own families who spoke another native language at some time or still do. Are there any bilingual speakers in their families? Does their family language background mirror the three generation pattern change to English they have read about?

Special thanks go to Guadalupe Escobedo, Loretta Harris, Jann Tresham, Gia Weathers, and Gayle Weatherson of the Hermiston School District, Heather Stanhope, Arts in Education Coordinator at the Eastern Oregon Regional Arts Council, and Alfredo Aceves of the Latin American Culture Club for their dedication and assistance in making these materials possible. This guide was written by Jean Spraker and Nancy Nusz.

Some students may know pig Latin and be able to speak it quickly, while others don't know it very well or at all. Ask students who are "fluent" in pig latin to have a short conversation with each other about some activity they all share. When the conversation is finished, ask the students to explain their understandings of the conversation's content. This activity can lead the class to discuss the importance of language in losing one's identity in one culture and/or gaining identity in another. Students who come from backgrounds that include non-English speakers might have insightful comments to share in this discussion.

Use the student question section to create an activity showing the diverse places where students' families originated. A world map appears in the student magazine. Have students pinpoint the part of the world their ancestors are from.

ETHNIC FOLKLIFE

Words to Review: folklife, customs, Mexican Americans, region, identity

In order to understand the concept of group, have the students create a Group Grid that identifies the elements that people can share and that give a group its identity. Choose groups that students might be members of: athletic teams, scouts, church youth groups, etc. Get students to place group names along the top, then list downward in the grid squares the features of each group. They will see that some of the groups will have the same features (several groups might be made up of all boys, for instance). It is important to show elements or features that distinguish one group from another. This helps students understand that, while groups can have certain features alike, certain features set one group apart from another and help define them.

Everyone including students has folklife. There are many traditions that take place each day in a school setting. A class-produced "Student How To Book" is a way for students to arrive at an understanding of what folklife is. Students should put in a things they learn informally at school. By brainstorming on the chalkboard, the class can come up with many customs, beliefs, stories, dance, music, games, foods, celebrations, or crafts that a new student wouldn't know, but an "old timer" student would. Students may work individually or in groups on sections of the book. The book need not be an elaborate finished product, just a concrete way to understand the concept of folklife. An alternate project might be a "Family How To Book" that gives students an opportunity to explore traditional daily activities within their own families.

Students can also create an Ethnic Group Grid. Here, they will want to list the specific features that define an ethnic group: place/country of origin, language, and particular traditions (religion, art and craft forms, music, dances, foods and celebrations are some.) It might be useful for students to investigate the ethnic groups mentioned in the student magazine. What makes Filipinos different from Germans and Scottish ethnic groups? Or, what were the differences between the Native American Indian tribes living in Oregon before Europeans arrived?

Show the video Oregon Folklife: An Introduction. See suggested activities in the Educational Supplement.

TRADITIONAL FOODS

Words to Review: evolved, seasonings, ancient, tortillas, tortilla press, knead, metate, griddle, staple food, carne seca, preserve, frijoles, mole, menudo, tripe, tamales, simmered, chile sauce

There are a number of activities which could serve to help your class understand the traditional foods in Mexican American culture. And, there are many questions to explore: What are some features of Mexican cuisine? Are there certain foods that are eaten throughout Mexico? What foods might be local to certain parts of Mexico, or might have been introduced by the Spanish? What techniques are used to preserve foods or to prepare certain dishes?

Show transparency #1.

Let some of the students look through Insight Guides: Mexico to find examples of foodstuffs produced in Mexico. Have them research foods to gain some general knowledge about Mexican diet before they begin any activities. Their research may lead to specific interests and activities they want to pursue individually or as a class.

Here are some suggested writing activities that explore the topic of ethnic and Mexican foodways:

Create a recipe collection, to which each student contributes a recipe for one of his/her family's traditional favorites, along with several paragraphs that give the recipe some context. (Many cookbooks provide models for this type of writing.)

Invite someone from the community or a student's parent to come in and demonstrate how a particular Mexican dish is made. Students would enjoy seeing tortillas made by hand. They could taste samples of the foods.

Visit a Mexican grocery store for a tour or to purchase ingredients for the dish.

Call Maria's Panaderia y Taqueria (567-8966), a local bakery and ask if you can bring the students in for a tour and lesson on traditional foods. Ask students to describe in writing the process for making something they saw on their visit.

Arrange a field trip to a local Mexican restaurant for lunch. With careful planning, the experience could include a behind-the-scenes tour of the kitchen. Students could choose one part of the field trip to write about in detail.

Traditional Crafts

Words to Review: folk art forms, folk artist, occupational, crochet, embroidery, piñatas, pottery, charro hats, straw weavings, woven fabrics, needlecrafts, doilies, symbolize, peacock, family roots, Durango, patterns, indigenous, diverse, Mixtec Indians, Oaxaca, fired, comal, cascarones, yolk, confetti,

It is important to get across the concepts of traditional craft and folk art, for they are different from more generally held notions about the role of art as being detached from everyday life and of the artist as an individual working away from people in an isolated studio environment. In a folk cultural context, craft traditions are integrated into the lives of people in a group. The method of learning a craft tends to be informal, though not necessarily, but one learns the tradition from someone else in the cultural group.

In the case of traditional Mexican crafts, as with the craft traditions of other cultural groups, there are acknowledged experts or folk artists who are respected because they accomplish the craft with a high degree of skill and, while there is room for creative imagination, the artist stays within a standard for doing the craft in a way that is considered the traditional or "right way of doing it" within the culture. In the case of making piñatas, for instance, an artist might introduce a popular TV cartoon character into the figures he or she produces, but still produce the piñata with cut paper as it has been done for years.

Students can investigate the various Mexican crafts that are discussed in their magazine.

Show transparency #2 and the crochet and embroidery pieces from the exhibit. Ask students to bring in hand made items that were made by their relatives. Label each item and create a separate exhibit or use the empty side of the table-top exhibit to display these pieces. Have the students each talk about his/her piece with the class.

Invite women to do demonstrate embroidery and crochet work for the students. Allow students to ask questions.

Show transparency #3. Have the students discuss the process of making a clay pot. Invite one of the Mixtec women from Stanfield in to demonstrate her traditional pottery.

Show transparency #4. Invite a piñata maker in to teach the class to make piñatas. This will take several days. Demonstrate how they are used at fiestas by filling it and letting the students take turns trying to break it. this can be very hazardous so make sure several adults are around to supervise.

Show transparency #5. Invite a flower maker in to show the students how to make flowers. This usually takes more than one class period.

Celebrations

Words to Review: fiestas, quinceañera, womanhood, rite-of-passage, extended family, attendants, Cinco de Mayo, General Ignacio Zaragoza, Puebla

Celebrations are ways to mark an event in life. All cultures set aside time to commemorate or celebrate, though groups may differ in what importance they give to certain things or in the ways that they go about celebrating.

Students can explore various celebrations in Mexican culture and in their own families. A class discussion will bring up many family, ethnic, and community celebrations which they look forward to or recall with pleasure.

As an activity students can make shoebox dioramas of a Mexican celebration or of one that depicts a celebration in their own family or from the community. To complete a diorama, the students will need to think ahead of the things that mark a holiday scene as different from day-to-day life.

Another option might be to choose a reason to have a class fiesta. Think about something the class might want to celebrate by setting aside some special time. Consider Mexican traditions the class might want to adopt into its own fiesta, such as Mexican foods, music, paper flowers, or a piñata. Ask someone from the Mexican community to come in and talk about what happens at a fiesta.

Take the opportunity for the class to attend a local Mexican celebration. Study Cinco de Mayo, for instance, and explore ways in which the class can partake in this locally. After the event, have student reflect on what they've experienced and what made the celebration different from everyday life. Use the enclosed teacher's guide for Cinco de Mayo.

Religious Celebrations

Words to Review: religious, Guadalupe, Patroness, Roman Catholic, spiritual, version, legend, Juan Diego, Bishop, chapel, peasant, miraculously, tilma, garment, heroes, Las Mañanita

The Roman Catholic religion is an important feature of Mexican national life, unlike the United States where religious beliefs are more diverse. Students can study about Mexican religious traditions as an aspect of Mexican culture that anchors and gives coherence to the culture. Students can think about and discuss what their own religious or spiritual traditions are. Are there stories or heroes that are particularly important in their own traditions? What symbols and rituals exist in various religions? This can be done in a way that is respectful. Spirituality as a concept can be discussed: What are the things human beings wonder about? What is faith? What purposes does organized religion serve for any group of people?

Show transparency #6 and show the tilma that is part of the exhibit. The Lady of Guadalupe is a very important figure in the lives of most Mexican Americans.

Music and Dance Traditions

Words to Review: corridos, mariachi, charro outfits, sombrero, network, banda, social dances

Have students listen to some corridos and mariachi music. Help them identify features of the music that distinguish these types from other music and from each other.

Ask students to explore the many purposes music serves in cultures? How might social music be different from religious music, a national anthem, or a military march? Get them to think about the various types of music they know about and when it is played.

Invite local Mexican musicians or dancers into the classroom to perform. Show transparencies #7-9.

Community Life

Words to Review: enriched, all-occasion cards, pastries, advertisements, condiments

There are a number of ways for students to explore how Mexican culture is a part of their community's life:

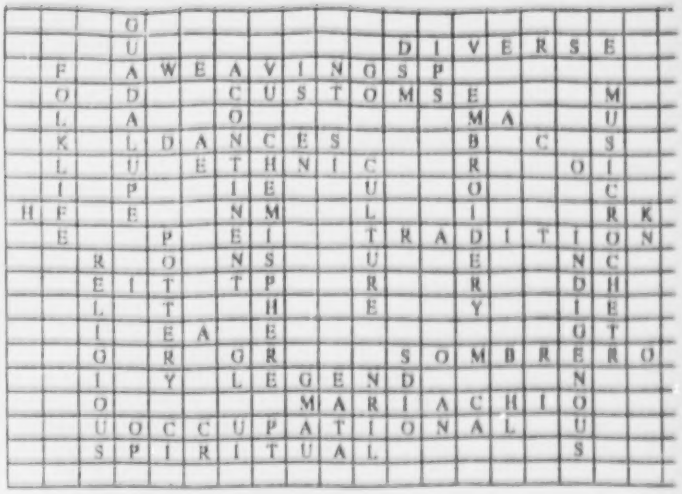
Ask them to start looking for signals of Mexican culture in the community. Do they see any products in stores that are Mexican? Does a radio station play Mexican music? Are there signs in Spanish in certain places or ads in the newspaper?

Put a map of the community up in the room and have students pinpoint where they are seeing these things. What can they learn from looking in the Yellow Pages of the local phone book?

Field trips out into the community make concrete what students are studying in the classroom. Imagine a day-long tour of Mexican life in the community for the whole class that includes visits to different spots where the breadth of folklife may be sampled. Visit a grocery store, a bakery, a home, and a church, if available. Have lunch in a Mexican restaurant, with a cook's tour of the kitchen or explanation of the menu. Prepare students to ask intelligent questions of their hosts. Use the enclosed Folklife and Fieldwork guide as a tool to help equip them with some interviewing skills.

Consider doing a community study that might result in a folklife scrapbook of the community. Portions of this may be arrived at in various ways, ranging from library research to interviews to fieldtrip summaries. Include literature and photos students may have gathered or taken. Make the scrapbook reflect their interests as well as the scope of what has been studied. Help them make the book something they are proud of, creating your own sense of community around it. When done, offer the book to the school library or to the local historical society to add to its holdings. As a finale, commemorate your scrapbook "publication" with a fiesta, inviting local dignitaries and members of the Mexican community.

Display the enclosed map of Mexico on the wall to help students locate Mexican states for the activity on page 21. Help students complete the research activity by inviting guest speakers in, providing library materials, and taking field trips into local Mexican American businesses.



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ethnic	culture	traditions
hemisphere	continent	heritage
folklife	customs	occupational
religious	embroidery	crochet
pottery	weavings	symbolize
peacock	diverse	indigenous
spiritual	Guadalupe	mariachi
sombrero	dances	music
legend		

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